

**Report of Accomplishments  
Fiscal Year 2005  
Snake River Soil and Water Conservation District  
1441 Fillmore St. #A  
Twin Falls, ID 83301  
733-5380 ext. 3  
Matt Nail, Chair  
Counties Served: Twin Falls  
Legislative District(s): 24**

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**Function or Conservation District Mission**

The Snake River Soil and Water Conservation District includes some of the most intensively farmed cropland in Twin Falls County. Since it was founded in 1966, Snake River SWCD has worked to reduce irrigation induced soil erosion and improve water quality by working with landowners on a voluntary basis. Working with federal, state and local agencies, sometimes through formal agreements, the District has brought a wide range of technical and financial assistance to farmers, ranchers, homeowners, towns and organizations it represents.

**Natural Resource Improvements Summary**

The Snake River SWCD has aggressively sought federal 319 grant dollars to develop constructed wetlands on critical irrigation return drains. Working cooperatively with the Twin Falls Canal Company and the City of Twin Falls, two wetlands were constructed on the Perrine Coulee drain system, an irrigation return which flows through the City of Twin Falls. Another wetland project is in the planning stage for a drain system that has historically had high sediment loads because of the topography and crop rotations.

**Conservation District Priority #1 — Water Quality**

Improving water quality throughout the District remains the top priority. On irrigated lands, the District is helping surface irrigators to convert to sprinkler irrigation systems to reduce irrigation-induced erosion through the EQIP and state RCRDP (Rangeland Conservation and Resource Development Program). Three EQIP applications were funded which will save 11,040 tons of sediment loss annually. Eight RCRDP loans were approved in Twin Falls County that will save 18,500 tons of soil annually in Twin Falls County. The Twin Falls Canal Company estimates that between 4,000 and 5,000 acres of surface irrigated land is converted to sprinkler annually and the Snake River SWCD's educational efforts and technical assistance help make that possible.

The District is also providing assistance to the USDA-Agricultural Research Service on a Conservation Effects Assessment Project that is evaluating what impact changing land management practices have had on



*The Britt Pond cleans up water from the Perrine Coulee before it enters the City of Twin Falls. It has become a popular site to hold field days or tours.*

### **Conservation District Priority #3 — Education**

As prime farmland around Twin Falls County is converted to subdivisions, educating small acreage owners about best management practices to protect surface and ground water quality has become increasingly more important. The Snake River SWCD received a federal 319 grant to sponsor a 16-week "Living on the Land" course taught in conjunction with the University of Idaho Cooperative Extension Service. Twenty three land-owners in the Oregon Trail Subdivision participated in the year-long effort. NRCS provided technical assistance to improve irrigation systems. A video is being produced to show the entire process of educating small acreage owners about pasture management, irrigation scheduling and other best management practices.

### **Information & Education/Public Outreach**

In addition to the small acreage education program, the District is also involved in a demonstration site south of Hansen that is intended to help small acreage owners see plants and techniques that can help them conserve water in private landscapes.

### **Community Collaboration and Coordination**

The Snake River SWCD has worked with a number of agencies and groups in the past year including: Department of Environmental Quality, Twin Falls Canal Company, Twin Falls County Commission, City of Twin Falls, Twin Falls County Highway Department, Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts, Idaho Soil Conservation Commission, University of Idaho and USDA-Agricultural Research Service.

**Synopsis of Assistance Coordinate for Constituents with Conservation Partners to plan, design and implement best management practices to protect, enhance and conserve Idaho's renewable natural resources.**

<b>Source</b>	<b>Purpose/Benefit</b>	<b>Funded Amount</b>
USDA	General Conservation*	\$793,013
USDA	Ground and Surface Water Conservation*	\$249,120
State	Water Quality*	\$515,197
City of Twin Falls	Water Quality	\$1,400
State	District Operations	\$12,332
Twin Falls County	District Operations	\$5,665
319	Water Quality**	\$310,000

\*Twin Falls County as a whole

\*\* Twin Falls County as whole and includes 40 percent local match

*This constructed wetland was completed in the spring of 2005. It is part of a series of wetlands being developed on Perrine Coulee to clean up return flow before it enters the City of Twin Falls. The Perrine Coulee watershed drains approximately 10,000 acres of farm ground.*

